

**Secretary's Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture**  
**September 25, 2019**

**Food Safety at Farm Markets** – Marketing and Development Division staff participated in a second meeting with representatives of the New Jersey Department of Health, New Jersey Farm Bureau, and a half dozen community farmers market managers and direct marketing farmers related to an updating of Chapter 24 - the “Minimum Food Safety Requirements for Product Sales at Farm Markets and Community Farm Markets.” These standards govern food safety practices at community farm markets and other direct-to-consumer settings. The New Jersey Department of Health sought input from a working group of ag industry representatives, community farm market managers and others with practical experience in the administration of these standards.

**Plant Laboratory accredited for Phytophthora testing** – The Plant Industry Division laboratory successfully completed the Type D proficiency test for the 2019 National Plant Protection Laboratory Accreditation Program for Phytophthora ramorum testing and is now a USDA Plant Protection Quarantine (PPQ) panel. The laboratory can conduct APHIS PPQ validated diagnostic testing facility for this pathogen.

**Water Use Database** – Agricultural and Natural Resources Division staff is participating in a subcommittee to address concerns around agricultural water use monitoring and is developing a pilot project to assess use, monitoring, and reporting. The NJDEP applied for and was awarded a United States Geological Survey (USGS) grant for the project titled: “NJDEP Water Use and Research Grant: Agricultural Water Use Reporting Assessments to support NJDEP’s Water Tracking Data Model (NJWaTr) Water Use Database.” The grant will look to place 10 water meters at farms which irrigate and currently use calculations to report water use. The water meters will be installed in time for the 2020 crop season. Volunteer farms in the southern half of the state are being sought.

**School Nutrition Program** – Brick Memorial High School was highlighted this month for winning last year’s Eat Right Move More Program. On September 8, Food and Nutrition Division School Nutrition Program representatives attended the New York Jets game with representatives from Brick Memorial High School. The high school will use the grant to enhance the school fitness and wellness equipment. In addition, the grant will be utilized to provide healthy cafeteria options along with healthy choices in grab and go coolers. Overall, the grant will contribute to the development of the students mental and physical health through a comprehensive approach to fitness and nutritional conditioning.

**Live Bird Marketing System** – During the month of August, animal health technicians (AHTs) conducted unannounced inspections at 37 registered NJ live bird markets and sampled 20 markets for avian influenza by sampling poultry. Additional activity during the month of August included: 1. The quarterly closure of seven live bird markets. Quarterly closures consist of cleaning and disinfecting the entire market followed by a minimum 24 hours of down time. Following the down time, environmental samples are taken at the market for testing. 2. The inspection of two poultry distributors. Records were reviewed as well as insuring compliance with 2:9-4.2(c), reviewing vehicle cleaning and disinfection logbooks. 3. During the live bird market and distributor inspections, annual biosecurity protocols were reviewed with each owner/manager. Best management practices were discussed as well as any updates that the market may have put in place since last year. 4. AHT’s sampled and inspected 31 backyard flocks for avian influenza.

**Agricultural Fairs** – There were three September Fairs all on the same weekend. The Open Space Pace, the Bergen County Fair and the Camden County Fair were held the weekend of September 21-22. Fair season was one of the best, with good attendance and for the most part acceptable weather. The fair managers and their volunteers are very committed to continue to showcase New Jersey agriculture and the Garden State.

**Spotted Lanternfly Outreach** – Plant Industry Division staff conducted two trainings in Middlesex and Mercer Counties with members of the New Jersey Nursery and Landscape Association and Rutgers Master Gardeners. Over 130 professionals from these organizations were trained about identification, hosts and proper reporting to help answer questions about this insect from the public. During the month, the aerial spotted lanternfly beach banner campaign continued to attract the attention of beachgoers during flights from Cape May to Sandy Hook every weekend. So far, the banner campaign has been successful in raising awareness in the public about this insect. Posters about Spotted Lanternfly were displayed in commuter cars and stations throughout the state for another month.

**Food Distribution** – The Emergency Food Assistance Program foods were allocated for September from Safeway Cold Storage. A total of 34,035 cases and 857,602 pounds of TEFAP Foods were available for distribution to six Emergency Feeding Organizations (EFOs) from United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) suppliers. At the time of this report, a total of 71,822 cases and 2,041,497 pounds of TEFAP foods were scheduled for direct shipment to New Jersey for several EFOs from USDA vendors during the month.

**One Health Regional Consortium Meeting** – On September 6, two Division of Animal Health veterinarians attended the One Health Regional Consortium Meeting hosted by Women’s Health Institute – Rutgers Medical School and Rutgers University – NJ One Health Steering Committee in New Brunswick. The meeting included presentations and actualization of the participating states on the One Health front. One Health recognizes that the health of people is connected to the health of animals and the environment. It is a collaborative, multi-sectoral, and transdisciplinary approach—working at the local, regional, national, and global levels – with the goal of achieving optimal health outcomes recognizing the interconnection between people, animals, plants, and their shared environment. Attendees included representatives from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland and Delaware.

**FFA International Leadership Seminar** – Three New Jersey State FFA Officers were accepted to the International Leadership Seminar for State Officers (ILSSO) program. ILSSO is a global experience organized by the National FFA Organization for current and past state officers. Owen Donnelly (Warren County), Talia Priore (Salem County) and Nicole Sickler (Salem County) will travel to Spain and Portugal January 2-15, 2020. While in Spain and Portugal, students will travel to Madrid, Toledo, Costa del Sol, Seville, Lagos, Evora, and Lisbon. Officers will tour various agricultural facilities including the US Embassy in Madrid, a John Deere Training Center, an avocado and mango co-op, an olive oil co-op, and a cork factory, all while embracing the Spanish and Portuguese culture. This experience includes eight weeks of e-learning units that precede the travel experience.